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Improvements relating to coin-operated
gaming or amusement machines

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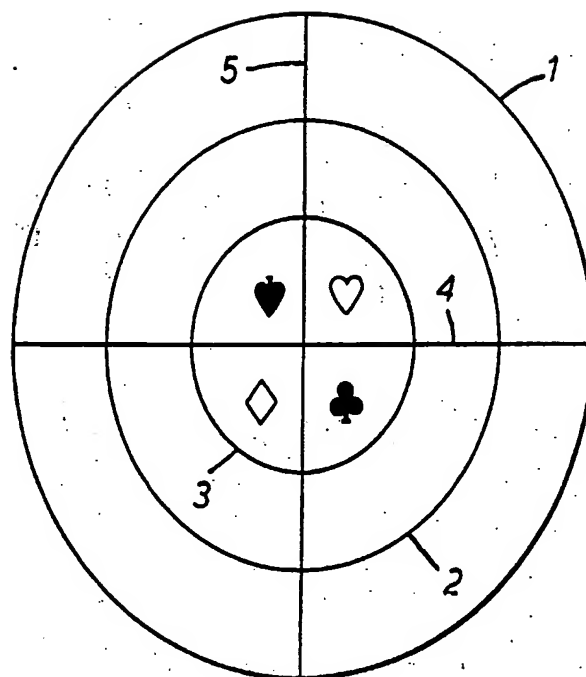
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"Improvements Relating to Coin-Operated Gaming
or Amusement Machines"

This invention relates to coin-operated or coin-freed gaming or amusement-with-prizes machines, and the term "coin" is intended in this Specification to embrace tokens which can be
5 obtained from the proprietor of the machine in exchange for normal money.

This invention is concerned with gaming or amusement-with-prizes machines of the kind in which a series of symbols carried by rotatable
10 drums, reels, discs or their equivalents, is displayed to view in a line, and when the machine is operated by insertion of a coin, and possibly also by depression of a lever or pressing of a button or the like, the drums, reels, discs or
15 their equivalents rotate and stop in an apparently random manner, and if the symbols in the resulting line are in a winning combination, a pay-out mechanism is operated and a prize is awarded and indicated.

20 Such a machine will be referred to as of the kind described. They are commonly known as fruit machines.

For convenience reference will henceforth

simply be made to reels for the rotatable numbers.

In order to add to the interest of such machines, it is common to add an extra 'feature' by which there is occasionally the chance of a prize being awarded for some occurrence beyond the simple arrival of the reels, after their initial spin, at a particular combination line.

According to the present invention there is provided a gaming or amusement with prizes machine of the kind described having a gamble feature by which on random occasions the player is offered a choice from a plurality of further symbols on a display other than the reels, and wherein when such symbol has been selected, by an action such as pressing a button, there is then a random selection of these further symbols by the machine visibly indicating said further symbols in sequence until a final indication is made, coincidence of the random selection with the previous player selection resulting in a win or an increase of a win already achieved from the reels.

There may be more than one such random selection, so that it is possible for the same symbol to be chosen more than once in a single play. In that case, there can be an even better win.

Conveniently, any existing win may be doubled or otherwise multiplied by a factor corresponding to the

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number of correct random selections.

In one preferred form, the display is circular with the further symbols identifying various sectors. Once a sector is chosen, lights
5 or other indicator means may

progress around the display, sector by sector, and stop in a random fashion. If they finish in a selected sector, then a win is achieved.

For a better understanding of the invention, one
5 embodiment will now be described, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawing in which the single Figure is a diagrammatic face view of a panel of a fruit machine.

It will be understood that the fruit machine will
10 have the usual arrangement of reels or their equivalents which can be rotated to stop showing various combinations of symbols on a line. These can have associated features which are now common, such as "hold" or "nudge" buttons, but these form no part of the present invention.

15 The panel has a circular display consisting of concentric rings 1 and 2 about a centre circle 3, all these being divided in quadrant fashion by diametral lines 4 and 5. Thus the central area has four right angled sectors which in this example are marked with the playing card
20 symbols of a spade, heart, club and diamond. These sectors may be, or form part of, corresponding selector buttons so that if, for example, the player presses the club, he would be making a conscious selection of the club quadrant for the purposes described below. Alternatively they may
25 simply be ornamental, with a selector elsewhere, as

described below.

The rings 1 and 2 are marked on translucent material and each individual zone of 90° arc can be illuminated by an associated light behind the panel.

5 These lights are used in the following manner.

The player will occasionally be offered a gamble feature in which this display panel comes into action. This feature may occur at random, independently of the reels, or it may occur when certain symbol
10 combinations on the reels finish on the win line. The occurrence of this feature may be signified in many different ways, but one preferred one is for the inner circle 3 to be illuminated, this also being on translucent material. There would then be individual lights behind
15 each card symbol sector, arranged to illuminate each such sector in cyclic succession, going either clockwise or anti-clockwise. As the playing card symbols are illuminated, each for a brief period of time, the player can decide on which quadrant he is going to gamble. If
20 he decides on the spade quadrant, he would press a selector button when the spade sector is illuminated. The same button would be used for other quadrants, by being pressed at the appropriate moment.

Having made that choice, the rings 1 and 2 are
25 brought into play. The arcuate zones are then also illuminated in a cyclic fashion so that it appears as if lights are rotating behind the panel. The rotation in the outer ring

may be in the opposite direction to that in the inner ring. Eventually, this rotation stops, and if it does so with a light in the same quadrant as the selected card symbol, then any win on the machine is doubled. If it should
5 happen that both lights stop in that quadrant, then the win is quadrupled.

There may be one or more than two rings and the circle may be divided into other than right angled sectors, not necessarily all equal. For example small arc
10 zones, illuminated for a shorter time than large arc zones and therefore with less chance of being lit when the cycle ceases, may be arranged to give better odds.

CLAIMS

1. A gaming or amusement-with-prizes machine of the kind described having a gamble feature by which on random occasions the player is offered a choice from a plurality of symbols on a display
5 other than the reels, and wherein when such a further symbol has been selected, by an action such as pressing a button, there is then a random selection of these further symbols by the machine visibly indicating said further symbols in sequence until a
10 final indication is made, coincidence of the random selection with the previous player selection resulting in a win or an increase of a win already achieved from the reels.
2. A machine as claimed in claim 1,
15 wherein there is more than one such random selection.
3. A machine as claimed in claim 2, wherein any existing win is multiplied by a factor corresponding to the number of random selections coincident with the previous player selection.
- 20 4. A machine as claimed in claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the display is circular with the further symbols identifying various sectors.
5. A machine as claimed in claim 4, wherein
during the gamble feature lights or other indicator

means progress around the display, sector by sector, stopping at random in a selected sector generating a win.

5 6. A machine as claimed in claim 4 or 5, wherein the sectors are not all uniform, and the dwell of the indicator means in each sector corresponds to its arc, any win being weighted progressively more the smaller the sector generating that win.

10 7. A gaming or amusement-with-prizes machine substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawing.

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